AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. (Original)   A system comprising:

   a database;

   a message server having no persistent state; and

   a plurality of instances of an application server implementing a Java application model coupled in a star topology with the message server at a center of the star topology, the plurality of instances sharing the database.

2. (Original)   The system of claim 1 wherein each instance comprises:

   a dispatcher node; and

   a plurality of server nodes.

3. (Original)   The system of claim 2 wherein each server node comprises:

   a java 2 enterprise edition (J2EE) engine.

4. (Original)   The system of claim 1 further comprising:

   a central lock server to provide cluster wide locks to the plurality of instances.

5. (Original)   The system of claim 1 wherein the message server comprises: